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AUTHOR Budenstein, Mary Jane
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ABSTRACT

The paper analyzes the development of the women's movement, indicating how this particular movement empirically documents the theoretical suppositions of a sociologically defined social movement. A social movement is defined as "a group venture extended beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behavior, and social relationships." In the first half of the paper, the author describes integral parts in the formation of a social movement, including the role of a communications network, organizational form, leadership, and goals. The women's movement has been able to grow due to the effective use of modern, mass media. There are two branches, the reform or "women's rights" branch, and the radical branch. Within the paper, the National Organization for Women (NOW) is discussed as an example of how the reform branch works within the system toward reforming social and political institutions. The radical branch, which has rejected a formal organizational style, is more liberal. Various crises are reviewed which prompted formation of specific women's movement groups on national, state, and local levels. Ten common goals are identified, including revision of divorce and alimony laws, Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) passage, and change in educational and political systems to assist and admit women. (AV)

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An Analysis of the Women's Movement As A Social Movement*

Mary Jane Budenstein

Department of Sociology
Washington University
St. Louis, Missouri 63130

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INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-1960's, significant changes regarding the status of women in our society have been attributed to the efforts of the Women's Movement. The widespread focus of feminism has raised serious questions about "the way people live--about their families, homes, child-rearing, jobs, governments and the nature of the sexes themselves"(Time,1972).

The vastly recorded social, psychological, historic and legal effects of the Women's Movement are not the products of random and spontaneous activities but instead are the consequences of a systematically developed social movement. Social movements, being intrinsically committed to the notion of social change, are dynamic entities which pass through several stages of development(King, 1969). This progression of phases involves a growth process which provides the necessary structural components for realistically implementing ideologies, such as a cooptable communications network, formal organization, elected and charismatic leadership and concerted goals.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the career of the Women's Movement, indicating how this particular movement empirically documents the theoretical suppositions of a sociologically defined social movement.

DEFINITION OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT

A social movement will be understood to be "a group venture extended beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behavior, and social relationships"(King,1969:27).

The scope is one of the major distinguishing features of a

movement. It differs from, for example, a company strike in its transcending community boundaries. The most significant social movements take place on a national(or even international) scale(Abel,1949:828).

Role of Communications Network

There are three conditions which are specifically related to the rise of a social movement: social unrest, pre-existing mass communication(King, 1969:13), and a crisis to link these two(Freeman, 1973:802).

Social movements are commonly ascribed to "social unrest" which is the result of discontent in many individuals, becoming discernable only when enough individuals express their dissatisfaction overtly(King, 1969:17). But masses alone do not form social movements. If a movement is to spread, a communications network must exist. The role played by modern communicative agencies is mainly one of suggestibility. The press, television, and so forth, clearly contribute to the public understanding, or misunderstanding of the movement. Such a pre-existing communications network appears to be not merely valuable but a prerequisite since the enthusiasm, finances, and efforts of members would wear short in the effort to create a network to disseminate their message. An important feature of this network is that it must be cooptable to the situation. In order for it to be cooptable, it must be composed of "like-minded people whose background, experience or location in the social structure make them receptive to the idea of the movement" (Freeman, 1973:794-795).

The role of the "crisis" is to transform social unrest into

action. This is achieved by creating a situation within which the members come to realize that the conditions under which they live must be changed.

Movement development: Organization

The first phase of the development of a social movement is termed the incipient phase(King,1969:40). During inception, the majority of its undertakings are relatively formless. There is yet no reliable way to predict whether a specific action(s) will eventually develop into a full-scale social movement. Some do, however, show greater likelihood of evolving into movements because of the potentially broad appeal of their goals, as will be considered later. The incipient phase, therefore, is one which is only defined in retrospect.

As the ideas which existed originally in the minds of the founding members begin developing into systematic actions, the movement is graduated from the initial phase of inception into its organizational stage. This is a gradual transition, with one phase blending into the next. In this second phase, the goals, methods of action, and so forth are being defined and redefined and the form of structure is decided upon.

Structural organization is a matter of degree. As a rough generalization, one could say that movements which seek to deal with a wide variety of persons and purposes must assume a varied organizational form(Cameron, 1969:10). Highly structured groups are generally molded after corporations and tend to hold formal meetings. These groups are accustomed to and approve of traditional forms of meetings, therefore use of them gives assurance in the propriety of what is being done.

The corporation, however, is not necessarily the most ap-

propriate model for a social movement. This structure can easily become too highly developed to get the work done. On the other hand, new structural forms tend to generate enthusiasm and, since people who join social movements are frequently dissatisfied with traditional methods of meeting, many seem to work more readily under less traditional systems.

Broad based social movements are often characterized by one main "reform" or "legal" branch and several other more "radical" branches, as is exemplified in the Civil Rights and labor Movements.

The "reform" branch attempts to achieve social reform through generally accepted means(e.g., legislation, lobbying) and its goals are not entirely contrary to the existing general societal norms. Therefore, it appeals to a broad group of followers. The radical branches generally attempt to achieve social reform through less conventional means(e.g., riots, demonstrations). Since their goals are more radical, as a whole, than the "reform" branch, they tend to be less readily achieved and the groups are not accepted by the greater society to the extent that the "reform" branch is.

Coordination is a special function of organization: groups are here related not only by a common goal but by their concerted action to promote that goal. Since movements transcend the local community, they are composed of more than one, and usually numerous, local units. Each of these is itself organized to some degree but each is also affiliated with others in a large overall structure. Although complete uniformity or consensus is never achieved, conformity with respect to policies and procedures must exist for the movement to be regarded as a coordinated one. An uncoordinated movement operates without such accord or all-embracing structure but the several organized units share common goals and a similar

body of doctrine. They are autonomous because they possess no formal structural ties with each other nor do they agree on tactics and specific policies(King,1969:28).

Leadership

There are three general means by which the power to make functionaries obey may appear legitimate(Weber,1947:324-385). The first is bureaucratic or legal authority. This leader is accepted on rational grounds, on the belief in the legality of the decisions. The control exercised by the bureaucratic leader is derived from the office and his authority is usually defined by constitutions and bylaws. A traditional authority, on the other hand, appeals to the "sacred" frame of reference, holding important what has existed in the past. This leadership is generally inherited or appointed. Thirdly, of a movement is avowedly anti-traditional or its potential members lack economic or other social power, the leadership may be charismatic(Cameron, 1969:92).

The charismatic leader's powers are truly his, stemming from,

> ...a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least exceptional powers or qualities...What alone is important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority, by his "followers" or "disciples"(Weber,1968:241-242).

Weber emphasized that the charismatic leader has no officials assisting him but rather disciples or confidants who have no careers in the bureaucratic sense and no privileges.

One must keep in mind that these three bases of authority are ideal types, therefore are rarely, if ever, witnessed empirically.

Although Weber notes that "charisma" is probably the greatest

revolutionary power in periods of established tradition(Weber,1968:111), cases can be found where, despite the absence of such leaders, movements have entered the world quite successfully. The fact is that movements have been born through the efforts of some very ordinary people whose qualifications for leadership seem to have been chiefly enthusiasm and industry. An example of this is Oliver Kelley, founder of the Granger Movement, whose hard work made the Movement what it is(King, 1969:42-43).

Weber believed that the opportunities for genuine charisma had diminished in the course of an increasing rationalization and bureaucratization of Western society.

Goals

The goal of any movement is the objective toward which the movement's activities are directed. Some form of social change is always explicitly indicated within this objective. A necessary distinction is to be made between general and specific goals. The general goals, since they are broad, are likely to have widespread appeal to members and sympathizers, permitting various interpretations (e.g., brotherhood). But these goals are not quickly or easily met. If the movement is to maintain the interest of its followers it must also have specific goals which are more readily relized, offering immediate gratification. These specific goals are usually preliminary steps to general goals which are often the more abstract ideals of the movement. The functionaries of the movement must decide upon the methods and targets of their actions and coordinate these to realize the goals.

Branches

There are two general branches of the Women's Movement: the reform and the radical. This is, within a broad-based social movement, a necessity. No one form of movement, set of goals, method of action, et cetera, could satisfy such a varied group as "women" who wanted to work for their liberation.

The reform branch is often referred to as the "women's rights" branch of the Women's Movement. Most important is their desire to work "within the system" toward reforming social and political institutions. This is a branch largely composed of middle-class, college-educated, professional women who come from traditional political and social backgrounds. However, within the last few years, this branch has been able to diversify to include other groupings such as working class women and housewives. There are many organizations within this branch but they are so varied with respect to their goals that no one could speak for the entire branch.

The one which has received the most attention and publicity recently is the National Organization for Women(NOW). Its efforts were originally directed at countering sex-discrimination in employment but have expanded to reach other areas of feminist concern which must be countered before equality in employment is possible(e.g., child care centers, equal educational opportunities, planned pregnancies).

The National Women's Political Caucus(NWPC) is another active organization within this branch. Its major aim is to have more women elected and appointed to public office and to have the women

in office support "women's issues".

Federally Employed Women(FEW) attempts to alleviate discrimination within the government and encourages the hiring and promotion of qualified women. Women's Equity Action League(WEAL) channels all its efforts into three areas of sex-discrimination:employment, education, and de facto tax inequities. Human Rights for Women(HRW) researches and finances relevant legal cases pertaining to sex-discrimination.

While these five organizations are by no means the extent of the "rights" branch, they do offer an overview of the gamut covered. In discussion of the "women's rights" branch, NOW will be used as the primary example.

The women involved in the radical or the "liberation" branch of the Women's Movement are generally younger and from a more liberal political background than the "rights" branch. The change they seek is "of the system" instead of "within the system". There are literally hundreds of small, uncoordinated groups within the "radical" branch of the Women's Movement. Because of their lack of coordination they take on tasks that can be handled on the local level (e.g., women's abortion counseling services, day-care centers, research projects) (Freeman,1975:119).

Role of Communications Network

As mentioned earlier, for the inception of a social movement to occur, social unrest, a cooptable communications network, and a crisis to link these two must exist. For the reform branch, the unrest was best

described in Friedan's The Feminine Mystique.

> This unrest was caused by the incongruence of their feeling the need to have a life outside the home and the "mystique" that woman's fulfillment comes solely through her exclusive devotion to marriage and motherhood(Freeman,1975:26).

Likewise, the professional women were made to feel guilty that they were neglecting their families.

The Women's Movement is an excellent example of the necessity of a cooptable communications network. The conditions for a movement existed before a network came into existence. but it was not until the organizational situation changed did the Movement emerge; it was not until a communications network developed among like-minded people (beyond local boundaries) that the Movement could develop.

Maurice Pinard has developed this theory in a study of the Social Credit Party in Quebec. He concludes that intermediate structures can exert a mobilizing force on individuals' participation in social movements because they form communications networks that assist in the rapid spread of new ideas(Pinard,1971:192). Another example of this building of social movements upon communications networks is the Civil Rights Movement which worked within the southern black church's infrastructure.

The federal and state Commissions on the Status of Women, first created by President Kennedy, developed a communications network of reports, mailing lists, et cetera, through which women interested in organizing could easily contact one another. The Commission created such a network as a result of three factors: they brought together many knowledgable, politically active women; the investigation offered ample evidence of women's unequal status(especially legal and economic); and the reports created a climate of expectation

that something could be done(Freeman, 1973:797-798).

The large National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs(BPW) would appear to have been a cooptable base for communication, but it was unwilling to assume this role. Although it lobbied continuously for legislation of importance to women, as late as 1966 BPW "rejected a number of suggestions that it re-define... goals and tactics and become a kind of 'NAACP for women'...out of the fear of being labeled "feminist"(Levine and Hole,1971:88). The same is true of the National Women's Party, which has been, since 1923, essentially a lobbying group for the Equal Rights Amendment(ERA).

The crisis linking social unrest with the cooptable communications network came as a result of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's(EEOC) unwillingness to enforce the "sex" provision of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which prohibited discrimination in employment based on race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.

At the third National Conference of the state Commissions on the Status of Women, Betty Friedan was urged by some women attending to organize a new action group around two central issues: sex-segregated "want-ads" and the need to pressure for the reappointment of Richard Graham, a man sympathetic to women's discrimination, to the EEOC. Ms. Friedan felt that these issues were not dramatic enough around which to organize so these women(some United Auto Workers Union women, some heads of State Commissions) agreed that, before they would decide to organize, they would test the need for such an organization by presenting a strongly-worded anti-sex discrimination resolution to see if it would be passed by the Conference at the final luncheon the next day. When

they discovered that the Conference was not allowed to pass resolutions or take action, they became convinced of the need for a new organization to speak for women in the same way civil rights groups had done for Blacks(Levine and Hole,1971:82-84). On October 29,1966, the National Organization for Women announced its incorporation with 300 charter members.

WEAL was founded over a crisis within NOW. In 1968 NOW decided to advocate abortion law liberalization. A group of women in NOW decided that NOW would lose much of its public support if it took such a controversial stand, thus losing a great deal of its political power. An Ohio lawyer, Dr. Elizabeth Boyer, as a direct result of this controversy, founded WEAL, the self-defined right-wing spokesperson for the Momen's Movement.

The crisis which led to the founding of FEW was the realization during a series of government-sponsored executive training sessions that attending these sessions was futile when the opportunities for women to advance within the government were practically nil(Levine and Hole, 1971:98).

The radical branch developed out of the student movements of the early 1960's in which college and university students participated politically. Within the Civil Rights movement these women were rarely permitted to participate in policy making; they found themselves relegated to kitchen work, mimeographing, typing, and "serving as a sexual supply for their male comrades after hours"(Koedt,1968). Their role in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee(SNCC), one of the more radical Civil Rights organizations was infamously encapsulated by a remark from Stokeley Carmichael that "the only position for women in SNCC is prone". These women were continually appalled by the irony

of the fact that the price for participating in the fight for someone else's equality was the loss of one's own(Levine and Hole,1971:109).

By the mid-1960's student political activity had begun to move in other directions. New Left politics began forming on campuses which were concerned with a wide range of issues: military expenditures, third world nations' problems, university corruption, capitalism. Women here found themselves being treated in the same way as they were in the Civil Rights Movement. At a Students for a Democratic Society(SDS) conference women demanding a plank on women's liberation "were pelted with tomatoes and thrown out of the convention"(Levine and Hole,1971:110).

The crisis that provided the impetus for a split between "women's issues" and the "New Left politics" occurred at the first national gathering of New Left groups in 1967. At this National Conference for the New Politics(NCNP) a group of women formed an ad hoc radical women's caucus to present a resolution for debate on civil rights for women(i.e., equal pay for equal work, unrestricted abortions). Through a series of political maneuverings, however, a much more traditional "women for peace" plank was substituted. At a general meeting, after most of the resolutions had been debated, the chair announced that there was time for the discussion of only ten planks, none of which was the women's resolution. One of the women there, Jo Freeman, convinced him to read the plank by threatening, "If you don't debate the women's plank, we have enough women here to tie up this convention for at least an hour on procedural motions alone" (Levine and Hole, 1971:114). He quickly read the peace plank and permitted no discussion, though several of the women had planned to offer the stronger plank as a substitute motion. Then, when no more

resolutions were to be introduced, a man rose to speak about "the forgotten minority, the American Indians". When the women realized that the convention was willing to listen to a new set of resolutions as long as they had nothing to do with "women's issues", and that women's issues were not considered political, Jo Freeman and Shulamith Firestone, another member of the ad hoc women's caucus, went to the platform to demand a hearing. They were told that their "trivial" business was not going to stop the conference from dealing with the important issues of the world. Ms. Firestone was literally patted on the head and told,"Cool down, little girl". Both subsequently became founders of the first women's groups of the Movement in Chicago(Chicago Women's Liberation Union) and New York(New York Radical Women) respectively (Levine and Hole, 1971:112-114).

Another of the more important influential groups formed was The Feminists. On October 17,1968 Ti-Grace Atkinson, President of the New York chapter of NOW, left the group and formed the October 17th Movement, later to be called The Feminists. This split was over structure, not program. The women who split form NOW felt that the traditional structure of NOW was elitist, and they wanted the decision-making positions chosen by lot and frequently rotated. Tha national leaders did not agree with this change, nor did the majority of the New York members. When the New York members rejected this change, the more radical members left NOW.

The women involved in the "radical" branch of the Women's Movement were able to capitalize on the infrastructure developed by the student movements for their communications: the underground press, conferences linked them with sympathetic individuals. These allowed them to make rapid initial growth.

Movement Development: Organization

The "reform" branch of the Women's Movement has clearly defined their parameters in terms of their tactics and goals.* They have decided to work "within the system", changing legislation to gain equality for women. Most "liberationists" believe that NOW has helped give "women's rights" credibility because of this tactical commitment.

The structural organization of the "reform" branch generally follows the corporate structure with formally elected officers, board of directors, by-laws, and so forth. NOW is governed by a national board of 38 members. It originally had three national offices: administrative in Chicago, public relations in New York, and legislative in Washington. As of January 1977, the need for expediency forced NOW to consolidate these three offices into one national office located in Washington. On the local level, it has over 800 chapters across the country.

Coordination within NOW has recently been made possible by the creation of regional directors to act as laiason between the national directors and local chapters. This has allowed a greater coordination of local efforts so that individual projects can produce a national impact (Freeman, 1974:301).

Another level of coordination is among the national organizations. There is such a wide range of issues within the Women's Movement

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* Therefore, by the definition of the organizational phase (page 3) the "reform" branch has already passed through this stage into the institutional phase in which the goals have been stabilized. This transition does not mean, however, that additional goals cannot be added as well as other changes be made to keep up with the changes within the branch and within society.

that no one organization could successfully cover them all. Each organization was either organized around a specific issue, or, after its organization, noted an issue not being pursued. In other words, since each rallied to a different area of concern, there has been little gross overlap of specific goals, although the general goals have been nearly identical.

The radical branch inherited the loose, flexible, person-oriented attitudes of the student movements (Freeman,1974:298). Their tactics are less well-defined than the "reform" branch because of a desire to retain a structureless organization within each individual group. Because of their commitment to "change of the system" they have received much less public acceptance than the "reform" branch. To them, NOW's basic premise of "full partnership with men," combined with its hierarchical organization would never result in equality. It would just replace one power structure with another similarly oppressive one. "We want to destroy the positions of power, not get into these positions" (Levine and Hole,1971:90).Along with denouncing a formal structure for the groups to hold is the across-the-board distribution of work to allow each member to "acquire the skills necessary for revolutionary work" (Levine and Hole,1971:145-6).But this structurelessness, while conducive to the goal of "equality", results in the inability to diversify and is therefore not conducive to organization. The goals and tactics continually change, thus making the membership change.

If organization is not possible within this branch, coordination is certainly not, except around ad hoc issues. An attempt was made in 1969 to unite various women's groups in which over 500 women, representing the spectrum of organizations, participated. At this meeting, there was an enormous amount of dissension, name-calling, etc., making it apparent that a totally coordinated women's movement was impossible.

Leadership

As stated earlier in the paper, a social movement need not be led by someone with charismatic appeal. The women's movement does have a few "stars", but no one person stands out dramatically.

The "reform" branch has continually-changing, elected leadership which is not conducive to "star-making", and such rational-legal leadership is not usually charismatic. This branch has a hierarchical organization with rather authoritative by-laws, dictated by its officers (Freeman,1975:93).

The radical branch would be a very good candidate for charismatic leadership because it is so avowedly anti-traditional were it not to denounce leadership in general as being discriminatory. They went so far as to devise a lot system "to develop knowledge and skills in all members and prevent any one member or small group from hoarding information or abilities" (Levine and Hole,1971:145). They emphasized that everyone should participate in the decisions that affected their lives, and that everyone's contribution was equally valuable (Lewis and Baideme, 1972:83). Any kind of structure, any kind of leader who might influence this equal sharing was automatically bad (Shelley, 1970:7).

Goals

NOW explicitly lists its specific goals toward which each chapter works on the local level, and for which lobbyists work on the national level:

1.) Total enforcement of Title VII
2.) Nationwide child-care centers
3.) Revision of tax laws to have full deduction of housekeeping expenses and child care
4.) Maternity benefits
5.) Revision of divorce and alimony laws

6.) ERA passage
7.) Full control of women's reproductive processes by her
8.) Change in the media image of women
9.) Change in the educational system to assist women in careers
10.) Change in the political system to admit women

The reform branch, as a whole, tends to work toward specific goals in the areas of child care, abortion law liberalization, ERA passage, discrimination, and the like. With respect to general goals, they all seek ultimate equality in every sphere of life: economic, political, religious, etc.

The specific goals of the "radical" women are directed toward changing injustices to women that were brought about by male-created laws (e.g., abortion laws, rape laws) and toward the creation of facilities which would permit women to be more able to pursue their lives outside the home (e.g., child-care facilities, family planning, health clinics).

They are different from the "reform" women in that they work directly on attaining their general goals as well as their specific goals. But the general goals within the "radical" branch are chasmal. This rift originated in the earlier student movements in which some women viewed "women's issues" as part of the larger struggle for socialist change, while others saw "women's issues" as the issue, arguing that the measure of oppression in any society is the oppression of women (Levine and Hole,1971: 108).

The first group, the politicos, accepted the Marx-Engels critique which locates the source of oppression in the home, the first institution of private property. From there, it is extended to capitalism. The latter group, the feminists, argue that male-defined social institutions and value structure stereotype people on the basis of sex roles and are therefore responsible for women's status (Levine and Hole, 1971:114,130).

Since the politicos viewed "the system" as the enemy, their general goal was the bringing about of a socialist revolution (Levine, and Hole,1971:148). Likewise, the feminists viewing "man" as the enemy, have their general goal rooted in what they term "radical feminism": the annihilation of sex roles (Levine and Hole,1971:143).

Social Movement Definition

By looking at some of the actions undertaken by the women of the Movement, one can see that it fits the criteria set by the definition of a social movement (see page 1).

It is "a group venture extending local boundaries". NOW has over 40,000 members working within 25 different task forces (e.g., media reform, ERA passage, rape law reform). There are chapters in every state. The membership within the radical branch is difficult to estimate accurately since the groups are not nearly as organized as NOW. It has been estimated by one person that at least 10,000 women must be in this branch. Another estimated that 500,000 was a conservative estimate (Epstein and Goode,1971:167). There are thousands of virtually independent chapters of this branch.

The Movement "extends beyond... a single event and involves systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behavior and social relationships." The "reform" branch's efforts usually take the form of lobbying on the local and national level, while the "radical" women's actions are usually seen as protest. These methods of actions for both branches stem from their political backgrounds. The "effort to inaugurate changes in thought" can be seen in the reform actions of leafleting for ERA passage, in lobbying for legislative change, making

speeches to influence a voting majority.

The event that brought the first mass media attention to the women's "liberation" branch was the Miss America contest demonstration at which a sheep was crowned Miss America in an attempt to show to the public that beauty contests were an expression of oppression and discrimination (Levine and Hole,1971:123-124).*

Changes in behavior are sought by the "reform" branch as exemplified in their continuous effort to ensure governmental compliance with Title VII through lobbying and picketing to end sex-segregated want ads; to end mandatory retirement of stewardesses at age 32. The "radical" women held speak-outs on several topics (e.g., rape, abortion); they demonstrated for abortion law reform; they held workshops on rape, centering around the need to change the laws to protect the victim instead of the rapist (Levine and Hole, 1971:157).

On August 26, 1970 the two branches formed an ad hoc coalition and commemorated the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage with the Women's Strike for Equality, demanding 24-hour child care centers, abortion on demand, and equal opportunity in employment and education (Levine and Hole, 1971:92-93).

Finally, they "work to inaugurate changes in social relationships". The "reform" branch seeks this primarily through lobbying, speaking and leafleting for the ERA, while the "radical" women seek the ultimate change through the eradication of social institutions such as marriage. They picketed and distributed leaflets protesting marriage at the New York City Municipal Building Marriage License Bureau,

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* This is an excellent example of the way in which a communications network can project a distorted image of a movement. A "freedom trashcan" was set up in which women could discard items symbolic of traditional "femininity". The discarding of bras caught the attention of the press which led to the image of women's liberationists as "bra-burners" although no bras were burned at all (Morrison, et al., 1970:566).

for example.

CONCLUSION

A valid means of assessing a social movement is to look at the impact it has made upon the society which it seeks to change. What is striking about the policy changes made in the United States within the concerns of the Women's Movement is not simply that there is still a long way to go, but that the sluggish governmental apparatus has done so much so quickly.

Before the inception of the movement, there were two fragments of federal legislation guaranteeing equality in employment: the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Their existence meant only that under them women could sue. It was not until the suits were brought with the assistance of NOW and the other groups that the laws were backed up by the courts. As a result of bringing to court cases of alleged sex-discrimination, it is now established that Title VII supercedes almost all state protective laws. The number of states with "protective" legislation has gone form almost all to almost none.

Under the Equal Pay Act, a total of $86 million has been found owing to 174,000 people, most of them women. In January, 1973, a landmark $45 million settlement was awarded to women and minority-group workers at American Telephone and Telegraph and in May, 1974 AT&T was ordered to pay an additional $30 million. Around 700 complaints of sex discrimination against colleges and universities have also been filed (Edmiston, 1975:161).

Two legal milestones have been crossed in the United States

during the life of the Women's Movement. They are the U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1973 invalidating all state laws that prohibited or restricted a woman's right to abortion during the first three months of pregnancy, and the Congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The probability of these two decision occurring without the work of the Women's Movement is extremely small. It was not until the groups within the Women's Movement concentrated their efforts on these that public support for them become so vocal.

Politically, there has been a real explosion of activism among women, the results of which were strongly felt in the elections of 1976. There are now 18 women in Congress, a net gain of two seats over 1969; 687 women in state legislatures, a net gain of 47 per cent; two women governors, three women leutenant governors and twelve secretaries of state, a total gain here of 112 per cent over 1969.

With respect to economics, a superficial glance at the "earnings gap" between men and women would show that it widened in the decade between 1960 and 1970. But without examination this statistic is misleading. When hours, age and schooling are taken into consideration, there has been a 4.8 per cent rise in women's earnings in relation to men's earnings. This gap is destined to diminish in the future with women entering business and professional schools in record-breaking numbers. The number of women in medical schools, for instance, has more than doubled over the past four years.

Great strides have been made in the area of sexual injustices. Feminist groups have pressured to change the treatments of victims of rape by hospitals and police. In Berkeley a group holds training sessions with police recruits and district attorneys. And, under pressure from

women's groups several states have changed their rape laws. New York and Connecticut have removed the provision requiring that the crime be corroborated by a witness. In California, Michigan, Florida and Iowa the law has been changed to protect the victim from cross-examination concerning her sexual experience with anyone other than the defendant.

As a result of legal action, the law that punishes only women for prostitution while letting male prostitutes and male customers go free has been struck down by courts in Alaska, Louisiana, Minnesota and Washington, D.C.

The great social changes underlying the Movement are reflected in the continuing increase of women in the work force and the lowered fertility rate. These changes fuel one another. As women have fewer children, they have more opportunity to work. As women work more, they have fewer children. The Women's Movement has certainly brought about social changes, but the important point is that the Movement is on-going; its total effect has not yet been felt.

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